

Message Text

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ORIGIN PRS-01

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SS-15 SSO-00 CCO-00 /017 R

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S/S - MR. ORTIZ

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P 211949Z MAY 76 ZFF4

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO USDEL SECRETARY PRIORITY

UNCLAS STATE 125246 TOSEC 130113

FOR FUNSETH FROM S/PRS

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SOPN (KISSINGER, HENRY A.)

SUBJECT: US AND SOVIET INFLUENCE IN AFRICA

NO. 10

FOLLOWING IS WALL STREET JOURNAL EDITORIAL, MAY 21, ENTITLED
"KEEPING THE HEAT ON IN AFRICA"

"SECRETARY KISSINGER AND HIS SUPPORTERS FEEL HE HAS
STRENGTHENED U.S. INFLUENCE WITH AFRICAN MODERATES ON
HIS RECENT TRIP TO SOUTHERN AFRICA, BUT IT WOULD BE
INCAUTIOUS TO ASSUME THAT THE U.S. HAS YET GAINED ANY
MEANINGFUL CONTROL OVER EVENTS IN THAT REGION. IN THE
RHETORIC OF 'UNRELENTING OPPOSITION' AND THE LIKE, IT IS
NOT EASY TO OUTBID THE RUSSIANS, AS EVENTS IN MOSCOW THIS
WEEK INDICATE.

"AS PART OF A TOAST TO VISITING MOZAMBIQUE PRESIDENT
SAMORA MACHEL, SOVIET PRESIDENT NIKOLAI PODGORNYY SAID
THAT 'SUPPORT FOR NATIONAL LIBERATION MOVEMENTS' IN
AFRICA IS 'ONE OF THE BASIC PRINCIPLES OF THE SOVIET
UNION'S FOREIGN POLICY.' WHILE SUCH MOVEMENTS HAVE
SCORED VICTORIES IN AFRICA, THE STRUGGLE IS NOT OVER,
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HE ADDED.

"OBVIOUSLY NOT. THE NEWS FROM NORTHERN RHODESIA IS THAT

MORE THAN 1,000 SOVIET-ARMED GUERRILLAS HAVE NOW INFILTRATED INTO THAT COUNTRY FROM BASES IN MOZAMBIQUE. THAT IS ESTIMATED BY THE RHODESIAN GOVERNMENT TO BE 300 MORE THAN SIX WEEKS AGO AND UP FROM 80 LAST CHRISTMAS.

"MR. PODGORNYY TOOK PAINS TO DISABUSE ANYONE OF THE NOTION THAT DETENTE BETWEEN THE SOVIET UNION AND UNITED STATES SERVES ANY INHIBITION TO SOVIET AFRICAN ADVENTURES. HE TOLD MR. MACHEL THAT 'AT A TIME OF EASING TENSIONS NEW OPPORTUNITIES ARISE FOR SPEEDING UP NATIONAL AND SOCIAL LIBERATION.'

"THAT THEME, WHICH IS A MORE POINTED VERSION OF THE POSITION TAKEN BY LEONID BREZHNEV AT THE SOVIET PARTY CONGRESS LAST MARCH, CASTS FURTHER DOUBT ON THE USEFULNESS OF U.S. ATTEMPTS TO PRESERVE DETENTE BY THAT OR ANY OTHER NAME. TO BE SURE, MR. PODGORNYY'S REMARKS MAY HAVE BEEN INTENDED PARTLY TO REASSURE AN AFRICAN REVOLUTIONARY WHO HAS A LOT OF PROBLEMS BACK HOME. MR. MACHEL MANAGED TO SEIZE CONTROL OF MOZAMBIQUE BUT HE IS SHOWING NO TALENT FOR RUNNING THE PLACE, WHICH IS RAPIDLY ON THE WAY TO BECOMING ANOTHER ECONOMIC BASKET CASE.

"BUT THE VERY PRECARIOUSNESS OF MR. MACHEL'S SITUATION CREATES AN IMPERATIVE FOR THE SOVIET UNION TO ENCOURAGE HIS STRUGGLE AGAINST RHODESIA AND PROVIDE AID FOR IT. FIGHTING A WAR TO DIVERT ATTENTION FROM DOMESTIC MISMANAGEMENT IS NOT A NEW TACTIC IN GOVERNMENT.

"IT WOULD APPEAR THAT THE U.S. HAS ONLY BEGUN TO CONFRONT THE PROBLEMS OF SOUTHERN AFRICA. IT NEED NOT EXPECT MUCH RESPIRE FROM THE RUSSIANS WHILE IT TRIES."

ROBINSON

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PRESS COMMENTS, TOSEC, SPHERE OF INFLUENCE
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 21 MAY 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: n/a
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 JAN 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976STATE125246
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: MDK
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760197-0884
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760527/aaaaawsl.tel
Line Count: 99
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ORIGIN PRS
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: blochd0
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 08 JUL 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <08 JUL 2004 by mendozsm>; APPROVED <12 JAN 2005 by blochd0>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: US AND SOVIET INFLUENCE IN AFRICA NO. 10
TAGS: SOPN, PFOR, US, UR, XA, WALL STREET JOURNAL, (KISSINGER, HENRY A)
To: SECRETARY
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006